

NTFC

NEWS AND NOTES

ISSUE NO. 1

Representing non-tenure-track faculty at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign

FEBRUARY 2017

CONTACT

NTFC Main Office
809 S. 5th St.
Champaign, IL 61820
local6546.org

Office Hours Spring 2017

M 1-3
T 10-12
W 9-11; 2-4
R 3:30-5:30

Questions? Dennis Dullea, Communications, ntfc6546@gmail.com

IMPORTANT DATES

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 23 Feb @ 5:30 pm | General Membership Meeting
McKinley Foundation, Rm 29, 809 S. 5th Street |
| 23 Feb-10 Apr | Nominations for elected officers will open at GMM |
| 17-21 Apr | Officer Elections (vote at NTFC office or online) |

SPRING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AGENDA

All NTFC members are invited to attend our Spring General Membership Meeting on Thursday, February 23rd at 5:30 in Room 29, McKinley Foundation. We have a great deal to talk about, and would like to see as many members there as possible.

- Several new provisions of the contract will go into effect this Spring. We will discuss what effect these will have on our jobs.
- NTFC has formed a provisional Stewards Council. We will open nominations for permanent stewards. Plans are underway to elect stewards from each college to represent members' concerns and interests and to help protect our rights as outlined in the contract.
- We will announce the opening of nominations for our upcoming officer elections. Because we included term limits in our Constitution, most of our current officers will not be able to keep their same positions. This means that other members will need to step up to help keep our union running. (This means you!)
- We will vote on [revisions to our Constitution](#) that fix some clerical errors and clarify certain phrases.
- We will discuss how and when the union should take official stances on political/social issues and/or endorse political candidates. It is critical that we represent the membership on issues like these, which makes it important that people show up and make their feelings known.
- We need volunteers! If you don't wish to run for office, but would still like to help, we have other opportunities, like the Organizing, Communications, and Solidarity Committees.

The General Membership meeting is open to members of Local #6546 only, but we will have membership cards available at the door for any bargaining unit members who wish to join at this time.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

It's my pleasure to welcome you to NTFC's first newsletter, which should help give an overview of what the union is up to, how you can get involved, and what to keep an eye on. This semester, there are a couple of big-picture items to pay attention to.

First, many of the new provisions of our collective bargaining agreement go into effect this Spring, Summer, and Fall, including better notice about your employment status for next year, the development of governance and evaluation provisions within each unit, and a new salary floor for the Fall. Make sure to familiarize yourself with how these changes should work and to check in with how well they are being employed in your unit. Read the contract on our website: local6546.org.

Second, NTFC is developing the last major body of the union, its Stewards Council, which now exists in a provisional form. We are working to form a permanent Stewards Council. If you want to be involved or have a say in how this representative body works, now is a great time to chime in.



Finally, I send out weekly wrap-ups of NTFC activity for those who are interested. I'd be happy to add you to the mailing list. Just email me at shawngilmore@gmail.com.

In solidarity,
Shawn Gilmore
President, NTFC Local #6546

LABOR 101

WHAT IS A "BARGAINING UNIT"?

A Bargaining Unit (BU) is the group of all workers who are represented by a union. NTFC represents all full-time (51% or higher) non-tenure track faculty at the UIUC campus, except those with majority appointments in Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, and Law. The union and employer negotiate a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), which protects the rights of all workers in the bargaining unit, whether they are "signed" members or not. Federal law requires unions to represent all BU members. BU members who do not sign a union card must still pay "fair share" service fees. Only signed members can attend general membership meetings (GMMs), become officers, and vote.

ARE BARGAINING UNIT MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR SALARY PROGRAM?

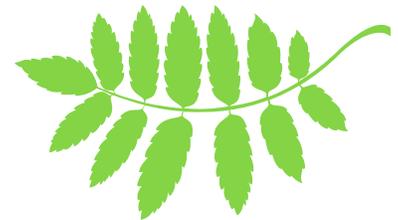
Recent announcements about the upcoming Campus Salary Program have included a standard disclaimer that says "Employees whose wages are set through the collective bargaining process are subject to their negotiated agreements."

Some union members have therefore wondered: are we eligible for the salary program or not? Sharon Reynolds, our contact in University Human Resources, told us that "The negotiated agreement with the Non-Tenure Faculty Coalition (NTFC) specifies that members are eligible to participate in whatever general salary program is announced, thus members are eligible for the mid-year 2.0% merit-based program."

SOLIDARITY NEWS

UNION NEWS FROM THE STATE AND NATION

- SEIU Local 73 came out to support us on the picket line last year. Local 73, which represents food service workers and building service workers at UIUC, just reached a tentative agreement in their contract negotiations with the university and will finish its ratification vote on Saturday, 2/18. To get to this point they held several pickets and a Contract Caroling event, both of which were attended by NTFC members in solidarity.
- Loyola University graduate students have voted to unionize, joining SEIU Local 73.
- Illinois state employees represented by AFSCME are voting on whether to authorize a strike amid contract negotiations with Governor Rauner, who wants to increase their health insurance premiums by 100%. AFSCME is bargaining for its 38,000 employees, but if they lose this fight, our own premiums will double as well, because Illinois state law bases insurance terms for all state employees on the AFSCME contract. Stay tuned for updates on this crucial matter.
- Betsy DeVos, an opponent of teachers' unions, was confirmed as Secretary of Education. Evangelical leader Jerry Falwell, Jr., president of the for-profit Liberty University, will lead a White House task force on higher education.
- Anti-union bills are being passed around the country, including bills designed to economically cripple unions in Missouri and Kentucky. Right to Work legislation has also been proposed at the federal level, so tough times for unions may be coming.
- The National Labor Relations Board determined in late January that "scholarship football players in Division I Football Bowl Subdivision private-sector colleges and universities are employees," which means they may unionize.



GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE FAQ

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE?

The Grievance Committee assists members who are experiencing labor problems in the workplace. If the Grievance Committee determines that a matter violates our Collective Bargaining Agreement (the union contract), a formal grievance can be filed.

HAS NTFC HANDLED GRIEVANCES SINCE THE CONTRACT?

Members have been vigilant in protecting their rights under our new contract. Many have come forward to discuss problems they are experiencing. So far, we have been able to work with the university administration to resolve several issues, including pay equity, promotions, and reclassification of job titles.



Christina de Angelo,
NTFC Grievance
Chair

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A GRIEVANCE?

Contact the union right away. You can write an email, stop by during office hours, or talk to a union steward you know in your building. Formal grievances have a fairly strict time limit and need to be filed right away. It is also really important to know that even if your case does not violate the contract, there are still other options. The Grievance Committee can provide you with resources or try to devise an alternative plan to address your workplace problem outside of the grievance process.

MEMBER PROFILE

JAMIE L. JONES, VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Jamie L. Jones, visiting assistant professor in the English Department, studies the literature of whaling, a body of material that resonates well beyond its customary nineteenth-century American milieu. The literature she studies is not just exciting adventure stories of men battling the elements. It also documents a moment with implications for the present: when the US abandoned its dependence on whaling oil, but continued to revere a past shaped by its associated industries.

Why is NTFC Local 6546 important to Jones? “Non-tenure track faculty are open to exploitation because we care so much,” Jones points out. “We love our areas of study and we care about our students. Being in a union forces us to recognize what we do as labor and to honor it as labor.” Jones also sees the union as important because faculty find common cause across departments and meet people from all around campus.

Jones says that identifying her most important union moment is easy: “The strike! It showed that collective action still works to put pressure on the administration. It also offered a model of resistance to oppressive systems going forward.”



While Jones appreciates the strength that the union demonstrated in successfully striking, she hopes to see the union sustain that strength by acquiring new members and bringing as many people as possible into the bargaining unit.

NTFC News and Notes | ISSUE NO. 1 | February 2017

Joe Grohens, Editor. Jennifer Burns, Design.
Contributors: Kirstin Wilcox, Sara Feldman, Christina
De Angelo, Dennis Dullea, Shawn Gilmore

